

## School Board Notes January 24, 2011

### \*\*\*\*\*Professional development last Monday:

Included a variety of workshops across the district. High school spent the day working on strategies to use writing as a method of learning content across all content areas.

Middle school spent the day learning strategies for integrating writing and reading into the content area with a variety of strategies Useful for all content areas. Teachers learned strategies for motivation, activating prior knowledge, and choice were discussed as well as many others.

And elementary focused on writer's workshop strategies and grade level meetings. Such topics as conferencing with writers, conferencing with writers, using conferencing notes for assessment, and many others we discussed.

Guidance spent the day discussing their professional learning community book the bully, the bullied, and the bystander while also brainstorming a list of needs in term of our programming here at Midd-West. Some specific discussion points were around rules, common vocabulary, definitions, and program components.

### \*\*\*\*\*Reports

I have provided you two reports tonight: The first is the report you are probably most familiar with as it is the report that PDE publishes showing the results of our AYP status.

The second report is value added or PVAAS report that is scheduled to be release to the public on February 1, 2011. This is a report that districts are familiar with as it has been used by data teams in the past to make plans for school improvement efforts. New to you is the fact that the report will be a published document available from PDE to the public.

A couple of things to keep in mind:

The report offers a comparison of PSSA scores only across multiple years. There is no other data included in the report except for PSSA data. By comparing data across multiple years we are able to look for trends or areas needing improvement.

Last year I provided for you a look at data from a cohort perspective, which is basically what PVAAS does as well.

In your packet I provided for you a PVAAS fact sheet, which should help you understand how the data is organized and calculated. I thought it would be helpful for you to see what the report looks like, so I have provided a copy for you at your seats.

Green is good and enables you to see at a glance that growth has occurred from one grade level to another.

Yellow shows that there is slight evidence that growth has occurred.

Pink shows moderate evidence that growth has not occurred.

Red shows significant evidence that growth has not occurred.

Results can be seen by year and by 3 year average.

Most of what you see in this report is consistent with what we have seen with PSSA scores across grade levels. There are some things that may surprise you. For example, if you look at 8th grade math you can see that we are showing a decrease in the 2010 mean gain and the 3 year average. This lets us know that we need to look more closely at growth in that particular grade level to ensure that all students are achieving one year's worth of growth. If I was to drill down farther into that data I would be able to see exactly which students are in need of growth. In this particular instance what we find is that students are scoring proficient and advanced on the PSSA have actually not demonstrated one year's worth of growth as measured by the growth index.

The good news is that we recognize certain areas of need and we are working on those. Of course you know the work that we are doing with writing. This has been our focus this year and we will continue to support this need next year as well. We have had two cohorts of teachers attend the reading apprenticeship training so far which equals over two dozen teachers across multiple content areas who have had support in reading strategies they can use with their students. We have initiate a new reading course which we have share the successes with you, and the list goes on.